

2495-8



Maryland Department of Planning

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Deputy Secretary

January 28, 2008

Mr. M.P. Malanoski
Medical Corps Deputy
National Naval Medical Center
U.S. Department of the Navy
8901 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20889

RECEIVED

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE RECOMMENDATION

State Application Identifier: MD20071212-1204

Applicant: U.S. Department of the Navy

Project Description: Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Activities to Implement 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Actions (BRAC) at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC): consider three (3) alternatives including "no build"

Project Address: 8901 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20889-5600

Project Location: Montgomery County

Approving Authority: U.S. Department of Defense

Funds: Federal: \$ 0.00 State: \$ 0.00 Local: \$ 0.00 Other: \$ 0.00

Recommendation: Consistent with Qualifying Comments and Contingent Upon Certain Actions

Dear Mr. Malanoski:

In accordance with Presidential Executive Order 12372 and Code of Maryland Regulation 14.24.04, the State Clearinghouse has coordinated the intergovernmental review of the referenced project. This letter, with attachments, constitutes the State process review and recommendation based upon comments received to date. This recommendation is valid for a period of three years from the date of this letter.

Review comments were requested from the Maryland Departments of State Police, Natural Resources, the Environment, Transportation, Business and Economic Development, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, Montgomery County, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in Montgomery County, and the Maryland Department of Planning, including the Maryland Historical Trust. As of this date, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency has not submitted comments. **This recommendation is contingent upon the Applicant considering and addressing any problems or conditions that may be identified by their review. Any comments received will be forwarded.**

Montgomery County [represented by Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive; Michael Knapp, President of the County Council; County Councilman Roger Berliner; five (5) Montgomery County agencies, and the local BRAC Implementation Committee], the Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Maryland Historical Trust stated that their findings of consistency are contingent upon the Applicant taking the actions summarized below.

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Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett, and Michael Knapp, President of the County Council, addressed these issues: the Draft EIS "understates many of the impacts on the region's environment, and the transportation network that serves the NNMCM; that important data is lacking about the number of military personnel, functions, or outpatients that will be transferred from the Walter Reed Army Medical Center to the NNMCM. These figures must be included in the Final EIS in order to address critical transportation and land use matters, such as mitigating traffic congestion and identifying housing needs on and near the base." The Draft EIS "does not address the issues of housing or lodging of outpatients, and their families."

Montgomery County Councilman Roger Berliner addressed these issues: the Applicant "needs to fundamentally rethink, revise, and rework its suggested mitigations to the impact of the relocation of Walter Reed to Bethesda; the Federal government must assume its financial responsibility to pay for road improvements needed to mitigate the effects of greatly increased traffic in one of the most congested areas of the County; construction impacts on neighborhoods surrounding the NNMCM should be evaluated and best management practices implemented to reduce the effects of excessive noise, air pollution, and truck traffic."

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection addressed these issues: water resources, air quality, noise, and transportation.

The Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue Services addressed these issues: an effective risk reduction program; the need for fire detection, alarm, and suppression systems in new and renovated buildings; the expanded capability of the NNMCM fire department to respond to emergency medical incidents; the expanded capability of the NNMCM fire department for basic life support, advanced life support, and transport; the need for wide shoulders or designated future traffic lanes for the use of emergency vehicles.

The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services expressed support for green engineering techniques, and the need for the Applicant to comply with local laws concerning redevelopment.

The Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation addressed these issues: the need to place the MD 355 Corridor Study on a fast track; the need to build a pedestrian connection between the Medical Center Metro and NNMCM; provide for alternative modes of transportation to be accommodated by non-auto mode use; document the transportation impacts of BRAC development on the area's transportation network; and the need to secure adequate Federal government and Department of Defense funding for identified off-site traffic improvements.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in Montgomery County addressed issues relating to: the provision of "sufficient funding to ensure that all have good choices for lodging and access to the site; the Transportation Management Plan needs to consider all feasible land use and modal alternatives available; more information is needed regarding stream valley buffer protection and the degree to which site layout will comply with State and local forest conservation requirements; the need to reconsider the Applicant's assessment of impacts mitigation responsibility; and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission needs to continue to participate in site development through its mandatory referral process."

The Montgomery County BRAC Implementation Committee addressed these issues: the top priorities are traffic and environmental mitigation; impacts of BRAC actions on off-campus neighborhoods require strong mitigation recommendations; the applicability of Defense Access Road grants to mitigate off-campus traffic issues; the need for a study of a proposed I-495 Beltway slip ramp for direct access to the NNMCM campus; and the need for a robust Transportation Management Plan. See the attached letters, and memoranda.

The Maryland Department of Transportation addressed these issues: coordination on the Navy's continuing effort to identify traffic mitigation opportunities for the area surrounding National Naval Medical Center; continued coordination to address mutual interests in serving increased traffic in, through, and around NNMC; close coordination, with regard to the funding of improvements, concerning a focused effort to be maintained on overall financial responsibility and scheduled implementation; NNMC should be prepared to participate by funding the relocation of the fence adjacent to MD 355 since it is on hospital property; the continuing exploration of creative funding solutions; NNMC include the Metro Station Eastside Entrance in their Final EIS.

Additional information needs to be provided in the Final EIS regarding:

- detailed transit ridership;
- bicycle and pedestrian volume;
- source information, trip distribution and projected modal split of the estimated 2500 daily BRAC employees (which includes the estimated 136 commuters due to cumulative impacts) and the 1862 daily visitors;
- the rationale used to assign a significant portion of traffic to MD 187 rather than along the I-270 east spur to southbound MD 355;
- specific commitments to implement the Transportation Management Plan (TMP) involving close coordination with the Mass Transit Administration, as well as State Highway Administration and Montgomery County;
- more detail is needed regarding the implementation strategies for these TMP programs and recommendations (i.e. ride-sharing programs, park and ride lots, parking management, and guaranteed rides home);
- an additional measure for patient and employee drop-off areas both inside and outside the gate access points;
- wording to address the ongoing Purple Line Study; and
- analysis of NNMC employee commuter origins.

See the attached memorandum, and tables.

The Maryland Historical Trust stated that "the Navy should continue to consult with the Maryland Historical Trust and others pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act."

The Maryland Departments of Business and Economic Development, the Environment, and this Department found this project to be generally consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives, but included these qualifying comments.

The Office of Military and Federal Affairs, within the Maryland Departments of Business and Economic Development, stated that it "recognizes the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for National Naval Medical Center Bethesda is in accordance with the actions necessary to implement the 2005 BRAC Law. The DEIS highlights the need for continued coordination between the Navy, Montgomery County, State of Maryland and residents to address critical issues such as infrastructure improvements to minimize the impact of the expansion while supporting the activities, mission and support of the Medical Center and the uniformed military."

The Maryland Department of the Environment submitted these qualifying comments.

1. Any above ground or underground petroleum storage tanks that may be utilized must be installed and maintained in accordance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations. Contact the Oil Control Program at (410) 537-3442 for additional information.
2. Any solid waste including construction, demolition and land clearing debris, generated from the subject project, must be properly disposed of at a permitted solid waste acceptance facility, or recycled if possible. Contact the Solid Waste Program at (410) 537-3318 for additional information.
3. The Hazardous Waste Program should be contacted at (410) 537-3343 prior to construction activities to ensure that the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous wastes and low-level radioactive wastes at the facility will be conducted in compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations.
4. Any contract specifying lead paint abatement must comply with Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.16.01 Accreditation and Training for Lead Paint Abatement Services. If a property was built before 1950 and will be used as rental housing, then compliance with COMAR 26.16.02 Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing; and Environment Article Title 6, Subtitle 8, is required. Additional guidance regarding projects where lead paint may be encountered can be obtained by contacting the Environmental Lead Division at (410) 537-3825.

This Department commented that NIH facilities, adjacent to NNMC, plan to expand by 2020. The NNMC expansion should be informed by the NIH expansion activity. This Draft EIS should have some discussion about the proposed improvements to NIH in Bethesda. The NNMC expansion should take the NIH expansion into account, and address how the cumulative impact of such growth at both Federal facilities will affect the open space, traffic, water resources, and air quality in the Bethesda area.

The Maryland Departments of Natural Resources, and State Police found this project to be consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives.

Any statement of consideration given to the comments should be submitted to the approving authority, with a copy to the State Clearinghouse. The State Application Identifier Number must be placed on any correspondence pertaining to this project. The State Clearinghouse must be kept informed if the approving authority cannot accommodate the recommendation.

Please remember, you must comply with all applicable state and local laws and regulations. If you need assistance or have questions, contact the State Clearinghouse staff person noted above at 410-767-4490 or through e-mail at brosenbush@mdp.state.md.us

Mr. M.P. Malanoski
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Thank you for your cooperation with the MIRC process.

Sincerely,



Linda C. Janey, J.D., Assistant Secretary
for Clearinghouse and Communications

LCJ:BR

Enclosures

cc: Beth Cole - MHT

[REDACTED]
William Ebare - MDSP
Roland Limpert - DNR
Ruth Mascari - MEMA

Billy Hwang - MDOT*
Michael Knapp - MTGM
Joane Mueller - MDE
Cindy Johnson - MDOT
Tammy Edwards - DBED

Roger Berliner - MTGM
Fariba Kassiri - MTGM
Jorge Valladares - M-NCPPCM

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